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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 003996

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/25/2015

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SUBJECT: SUNNI DIALOGUE COUNCIL'S MASHADANI SEEKS
AMBASSADOR'S HELP WITH CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION

REF: A. (A) BAGHDAD 3498

[1](#)B. (B) BAGHDAD 3753

Classified By: Ambassador Khalilzad for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: At a September 24 meeting, the Ambassador discussed Sunni Arab reaction to the draft constitution with Mahmoud Mashadani, Constitution Committee and Iraqi Council for National Dialogue (ICND) member. The Ambassador agreed to advocate for Sunni Arab-proposed changes to the constitution in upcoming discussions with Shia and Kurdish leaders if the Sunnis agree to publicly support the text with those changes. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Mashadani admitted there had been no recent negotiations between Sunni Arab and Shia Coalition leaders on the constitution. He did say, however, that the ICND, Iraqi Islamic Party (IIP), and Adnan Dulaimi's General Conference could endorse the constitution publicly if the Shia agreed to the six points already agreed between these Sunni Arab groups and Kurdish leaders in Irbil. (NOTE: Ref b describes the Irbil meeting. The changes concern (a) text of the preamble; (b) use of two languages, Arabic and Kurdish; (c) Article 7 text on banned entities; (d) language on the National Assembly studying options on forming regions; (e) language on amendment procedures; and (f) language on Iraq's unity. END NOTE.)

[1](#)4. (C) The Ambassador stated that if Sunni Arab leaders -- including Adnan Dulaimi, Tariq al-Hashimi, and Saleh Mutlak -- sign a letter to this effect, he would press for Shia agreement. Mashadani also pressed for inclusion of additional language on Iraqi unity in Section 1 (Basic Principles): "Iraq is a single country that is fully sovereign; its citizens are all Iraqis, and this Constitution is the guarantor of its unity."

[1](#)5. (C) Mashadani intimated that the ICND can convince hesitant Sunni Arabs, even some former Ba'athists, to vote in favor of the constitution if there is Shia agreement to the six points. The obstacles, he claimed, are Zarqawi and Iranian intelligence. Mashadani requested U.S. support to ensure a peaceful election period. The main Sunni fear, he asserted, is not federalism but rather a weak Iraqi government that falls under clerics' control. Mashadani asked to meet with former high-ranking Ba'ath Party member Fadi Ibraheem al-Mashadani, whom he said is currently in Coalition custody. The Ambassador said he would raise this request with MNF-I.

[1](#)6. (C) The Ambassador assured Mashadani that full participation for all Iraqis is a major U.S. goal. Many of the problems the Sunni Arabs now face, he reminded Mashadani, result from their January boycott of the elections. The Ambassador added that the U.S. is coordinating security logistics with Iraqi Army and Iraqi Police forces during the election period. He further explained that Embassy officials are continuing discussions with the Independent Election Commission of Iraq (IECI) to provide an adequate number of polling stations.

[1](#)7. (C) The Ambassador emphasized that Iraq's success depends primarily on political efforts. For example, the Ambassador suggested using an anti-federalism platform in a united Arab bloc for the December elections rather than urging people to vote against the constitution in October.

[1](#)8. (C) On the subject of his September 20 arrest, Mashadani said that he had never been shown a judge's order or warrant. He said that the raid on his neighborhood could have been "disastrous" had it not been for the presence of a U.S. military officer monitoring the Iraqi police. "We can trust the U.S. forces," he stated. Mashadani claimed to witness torture by electrocution while in the MOI detention center in the Baghdad neighborhood of Gureiat. He said that the experience helped him understand why the ITG has declined to appoint a new Minister of Human Rights. Mashadani was released September 21 and his son was released on September 22.
Khalilzad